

A
Crisis
of

Conscience

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The Ahmadiyya point of view on the recent demands of the Ulemas and consequent promulgation of Anti-Ahmadiyya Ordinance 26th April, 1984 by the Government of Pakistan.





Foreword

Here is a brief explanation of why this publication is being presented to the public.

For the past two years, Mullahs, i.e., the orthodox clergy in Pakistan, have been actively engaged in a campaign of calumny and slander against the Founder, the leader, and members of the Ahmadiyya Community in Islam. They have been holding public meetings, delivering speeches and distributing hundreds and thousands of pamphlets in which spurious charges and false allegations are made about Ahmadis and their beliefs. The Mullahs have vociferously demanded that Ahmadis should be penalized and punished for not subscribing to a religious dogma dictated by orthodoxy. A continuous stream of propaganda has been let loose to incite the masses to violence against the rank and file of the Ahmadiyya Community.

Pakistan is under a Martial Law government which has imposed a ban on public meetings and also prohibited activities which endanger public order and security. Nonetheless, no attempt has been made to check the illegal activities of a handful of religious fanatics. On the other hand, the government has aided and abetted them by providing all the facilities of its controlled press and media including radio and television to propagate and publicise the activities and pronouncements of the Mullahs. With a few exceptions, the local newspapers have also gone along with them, as they depend upon the government's patronage for their solvency.

Apart from the spiritual strength derived from total submission to Allah and devotion to Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings of Allah be on him, the Ahmadis possess neither the material resources nor the means to effectively counter an officially organised agitation against them. However, with a view to explaining the position of the Ahmadiyya Community on various issues raised by the Mullahs and to remove misunderstandings created by hostile propaganda, the Jama'at-e-Ahmadiyya published an Urdu booklet under the title, 'IK HARFE-NASEHANA'. Instead of receiving a fair chance

to put across their views and straighten the record, the Ahmadis were thwarted in their legitimate effort by the Head of the State, General Zia-ul Haq. As reported in the daily Pakistan Times (15 April 1984), he lashed out at the Ahmadis while addressing a meeting in Lahore. He said: 'If the Qadianis in the garb of Muslims propagated their belief within their community or outside the Jama'at or extended an invitation to others to come into their fold, then their propagational literature, i.e., newspapers, periodicals, books and pamphlets would be confiscated and those responsible for it would be proceeded against with an iron hand.'

A few days later, on 23 April, the government proscribed the booklet 'IK HARFE NASEHANA' and made its distribution a criminal offence. In fact some Ahmadis were arrested even before the official decree was issued and they are, up to now, still under detention. Meanwhile, the Mullahs and the information media continue to enjoy the liberty and the license to go on with scurrilous attacks against Ahmadis.

'A Crisis of Conscience' is the English translation of 'IK HARFE-NASEHANA' with a few excerpts added from Munir Enquiry Report and the reader is invited to make his own judgment on what the Jama'at-e-Ahmadiyya has to say on a controversy raised by the Mullahs in Pakistan.

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A CRISIS OF CONSCIENCE

A CURIOUS COINCIDENCE

It is a curious coincidence, almost weird, that whenever Pakistan is faced with a critical situation either because of threat of external aggression or internal upheaval, a group of Maulvis — foremost among them the Ahrar delinquents — invariably organise a campaign of hatred and violence against the Ahmadiyya Community. The declared aim of such a movement is the protection of Khatme-Nubuwwat — as if Khatme-Nubuwwat needed Ahrar's protection — but the end result, invariably, is the perpetration of plunder, arson, murder and the creation of a law and order problem on such a scale as to distract the attention of the people of Pakistan and their Government from the primary threats.

Ever since the occupation of Afghanistan by foreign troops and the deterioration of relations between India and Pakistan over the question of re-armament and nuclear research programme, the Maulvis belonging to the Ahrar group have come to life again, whipping up anti-Ahmadiya propaganda at an unprecedented scale. This may again be a coincidence, but if so, it is a very curious coincidence indeed!

THE ROLE OF THE AHRAR

The principal actors in this oft-repeated drama are the Maulvis belonging to the defunct Majlise-Ahrare-Islam, now operating under the name and style of Majlise-Tahaffuze-Khatme-Nubuwwat. The Ahrar were a group of nationalist Muslims who were a part of the Indian National Congress until 1931. During that year, with the implicit approval of the Congress, they decided to leave the parent body and form an organisation under the name of Majlise-Ahrare-Islam. The main purpose behind the move was to create a credible platform within Muslim ranks from which to fight against the emerging power of the All India Muslim League. Their first act, in the very first year of their formation, was to enter the ranks of the Muslim freedom movement in Jammu and Kashmir against the Dogra rulers, and sabotage it from within. Their next betrayal of the Muslim cause came at the height of the movement for the recovery of Masjid Shaheed Ganj in Lahore, which occasioned the late Maulana Zafar Ali Khan to write his famous

poem published at the time on the front page of the Daily 'Zamindar':

*Allah ke qanoon ki pehchan se bezar,
Islam aur iman aur ihsan se bezar,
Namoose payambar ke nigheban se bezar,
Kafir se mawalaat musalman se bezar,
Punjab ke Ahrar Islam ke ghaddar.*

Translation

*They hate to recognise the dictates of the word of Allah;
Islam and Faith and kindness are but loathsome to them,
They fall foul of every one who defends the honour of the
Holy Prophet,
They hobnob with the infidel and detest the Muslim,
Lo – The Ahrar of the Punjab – The Traitors of Islam.
(Republished Daily Zamindar, 21 October 1945).*

The final and the crowning act of betrayal by the Ahrar was, however, yet to come. And for that we can do no better than to quote the relevant passages from the Report of the Court of Inquiry constituted under PUNJAB ACT II of 1954, headed by the Honourable Justice Mohammad Munir. The Report says:

'Though they had cut themselves from the Congress, the Ahrar continued to flirt with that body right up to the Partition. One of the resolutions passed by the Working Committee of the Majlis-i-Ahrar which met at Delhi on 3rd March, 1940, disapproved the Pakistan Plan, and in some subsequent speeches of the Ahrar leaders, Pakistan was dubbed as 'Palidistan'. In a press statement issued on 29th November, 1940 Maulana Daud Ghaznavi announced the decision of the Ahrar to merge themselves into the Congress. In the resolution passed by the Punjab Provincial Ahrar Conference held at Gujranwala from 17th to 19th March 1943 and in a subsequent resolution passed at Saharanpur in the same year, they declared themselves against the proposed Partition which they described as vivisection of the country. In every important speech one leader of theirs or another criticised the Muslim League and its leadership, including the Quaid-i-Azam for whom they had little love and who in those days had come to be regarded as the sole and undisputed leader of the Muslim nation. They took mean advantage of his liberal views and lack of ostentation in religious matters by calling him an infidel. The authorship of the couplet –

*Ik kafira ke waste Islam ko chhora yeh Quaid-i-Azam hai keh hai
Kafir-i-Azam*

is attributed to Maulana Mazhar Ali Azhar, a leading personality in the

Ahrar organization, who had the audacity to assert before us that he still held that view.'

(Report page 11)

'So far as the Ahrar are concerned, they consistently exploited religion for their political ends. They left the Congress on grounds of religion, and they opposed the Muslim League and Pakistan on that ground. In a statement, issued from Amritsar on 19th September, 1945, Maulana Mazhar Ali Azhar said that the Muslim League's slogan of Pakistan was a stunt and that he neither recognised Mr. Jinnah as Quadi-i-Azam nor the League as the representative of Muslamans, because Mr. Jinnah's life was un-Islamic. He appealed to the people that they should not be misled by the slogans for Pakistan and that in the coming elections they should cast their votes for those who were serving the public. The 'Milap' of Lahore, in its issue of 27th December 1945, published a speech by the Ahrar leader, Amir-i-Shariat Sayyed Ata Ullah Shah Bukhari, which he made at the Ahrar Conference at Alipore. In this speech the Amir-i-Shariat announced with the beat of drum that the leaders of the Muslim League were a class of be-amal (irreligious) people who were not only unaware of their aqibat (life after death) but were also spoiling the aqibat of others and that the State which they were attempting to create was not Pakistan but Khakistan. The same venerable leader in a speech at Pasrur said that no mother had yet given birth to a child who could even make the 'P' of Pakistan (vide Istiqlal Number of the 'Daily Jadid Nizam' of 1950). In his speeches Chaudhri Afzal Haq, the Ahrar leader, made many sarcastic and disparaging references to Muslim League's conception of Pakistan, which are reported at pages 41, 82-83 and 99 of 'Khutbat-i-Ahrar'. Maulvi Muhammad Ali Jullundri admitted in a speech made at Lahore on 15th February, 1953, that the Ahrar had been opposed to Partition and that the reasons for that view of theirs would become apparent to the people within a short time. Both before and after the Partition, he also used the word 'palidistan' for Pakistan, and Capt. Abdul Haye's evidence before us proves that even during the disturbances in one of the speeches made at Lahore by the Ahrar leader, Amir-i-Shariat Sayyed Ata Ullah Shah Bukhari, Pakistan was described as a prostitute which the Ahrar had accepted perforce.'

(Report page 256)

'The conduct of the Ahrar calls for the strongest comment and is especially reprehensible — we can use no milder word — for the reason that they debased a religious cause by pressing it into service for a temporal purpose and exploited religious susceptibilities and sentiments of the people for their personal ends. That the Ahrar were sincere in what they did can only be believed by themselves because their past history is so glaringly inconsistent that only a fool could be misled by their professions of religiousness. Khawaja Nazim-ud-Din described them as enemies of Pakistan, and this compliment they

richly deserved for their past activities. That they turned out to be enemies of the new State when it came into being has been proved by their subsequent conduct. How could a party which was opposed to Pakistan, to the Muslim League and all its leaders and which was a mere handmaid of the Congress, give up all its past ideology and on the establishment of Pakistan which came into being despite its efforts, completely change its views, as it were, overnight, and pose as the sole monopolist of Islam in a State which it had done its best to prevent from coming into existence? Did the Ahrar discover their ideal only after the Partition? Where was their cry of an Islamic State for Pakistan when they were engaged in a grim struggle against parties and people who were claiming only a homeland for the Muslims?

‘And are they not, if recent press reports are true, even now in the good books of the Congress and pitted against the only Muslim Party in India? Have not their Indian comrades, who still call themselves Ahrar, been commissioned by the Congress to reconcile the Kashmiries to Bakhshi regime in Kashmir? If all this is true, then only simple minded folks in Pakistan could be fooled by their expressions of religious fervour.’

(Report page 259)

THE CURRENT CAMPAIGN

The preceeding quotations from the findings of the Court of Inquiry give ample insight into the ideological alliance between the Ahrar and the Indian National Congress.

The Majlise-Tahaffuze-Khatme-Nubuwwat, Pakistan, whose parent organisation is still flourishing in India under the old name of Majlise-Ahrare-Islam, has again stepped up its anti-Ahmadiya campaign since the past one year. We are being dubbed, all in the same breath, as Israeli agents, Russian agents, American agents, British agents, and Indian agents and any one with whom the Ahraris or their principals have a score to settle, is dubbed as a Qadiani agent. To spread their gospel of hatred, hundreds of public meetings have been held in every part of the country and particularly in the Punjab for which students from various Madrasas are brought in from outside in hired transport. Hundreds of thousands of leaflets, booklets and magazines have been published and distributed throughout the country. We shall not comment on the cost of such an elaborate, lavish and protracted campaign, nor shall we try to guess as to who is providing the funds. We cannot, however, refrain from observing that the venom fed to the public in this campaign against Jamaat-e-Ahmadiyya is based on pure fabrication and falsehood. The undisguised incitement of masses to violence and the naked and unabashed profanity and vulgarity displayed in the speeches and most of the literature is punishable under the ordinary law of land, not to mention the Martial Law and the existing censorship regulations. However, the Administration, as a

matter of political expediency found it convenient to ignore the malice and injury inflicted on a law-abiding section of the population. We offer no further comment and turn to Allah with our complaint and seek only His help for redress.

THE DEMANDS

In brief, the latest demands by the Maulvis are that since the Ahmadis have been declared non-Muslims, they should be debarred from calling themselves as Muslims, from following Shaaere-Islam, from using Muslim terminology e.g. 'Nabi', 'Rasul', 'Sahabi', 'Ummal Momineen', 'Ahle Bait', 'Alaihissalam', 'Masjid', 'Azan', etc., as this is liable to injure the feelings of the Muslims.

AN ANALYSIS

Our case with regards to the outright rejection of the allegations rests on three fundamentals:-

a) **Firstly**, it is against the basic teachings of Islam that a person whether a Muslim or a non-Muslim be debarred from acting on any part of Islamic shariat, custom or practice.

b) **Secondly**, it is absurd to claim that the feelings of Muslims are hurt if a person, whether a Muslim or a non-Muslim, practises Islam. But even if it were true, and a certain religious bigots such as the Ahrari Maulvis did get hurt by a person following his religious practices according to his conscience, such hurt would in no way deprive a citizen of the right to practise his own faith.

c) **Thirdly**, once the National Assembly of Pakistan has declared that the Ahmadis are Not Muslims for the purposes of Constitution and Law, because they believe in Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad as Mehdi and Masihe Mauood and, as such, a prophet of God from amongst the devoted followers of the Prophet of Islam, peace and blessings of Allah be upon him, their right to such a belief and all the practices which follow from that belief, such as the use of terms 'Nabi', 'Rasul', 'Alaihissalam' etc., in respect of the person in whose prophethood they believe, are implicit in the amendment and the guarantees in the constitution.

Islam is a universal religion, the Prophet of Islam, peace and blessings of Allah be upon him, was sent for the entire mankind, and the Holy Quran is the divine law for the entire human race. It is the fundamental right of an individual to follow the Holy Quran, whenever and wherever he can, according to his knowledge, circumstances and capabilities. Even if a Christian decided to offer 'Namaz', or keep 'Rozah' or call 'Azan', no one could object to it.

That Christian would only be following the universal command:

O ye men, worship your Lord. (2:21)

and by worshipping his God, the Islamic way, he would only be coming nearer to Islam.

Though Islam is the first religion to give to the mankind, its message of love, universal brotherhood and tolerance, it is a tragedy that this message was completely ignored by the professional Mullah who was brought into existence as a political necessity by the early kingdoms formed in the Muslim World. It is a matter of history that the first victim of the Mullah was Sayyadna Hazrat Imam Husain, peace be upon him, who was declared an apostate and punishable by death by Qazi SHURAIH, on the behest of Ibne-Ziad in return for a few sacks of gold coins delivered during the night. Historically, that was a tragic night because the weapon of 'Takfir' i.e. declaring a Muslim an apostate or a kafir, was given into the hands of the political Mullah, who thereafter wielded it, on many occasions, towards his own ends, and to serve the interests of his political masters. All the four Imams including Hazrat Imam Abu Hanifa, may God's mercy be upon him, and almost all the venerable saints of Islam and their followers were, at one time or another, declared apostate and subjected to persecution at the altar of political expediency.

But there was one manner of persecution which was left to the Ahrari Maulvis to discover and employ in the fourteenth and the fifteenth century Hijri. While hundreds of thousands of Muslims were declared 'Kafirs' at the hands of the Mullahs in the past, and have suffered all manner of persecution including confiscation of property, imprisonment and death, no one ever demanded that they should be forbidden from professing and practising Islam. No one ever demanded that they should not be allowed to offer their prayers as taught and practised by the Holy Prophet, or that they should NOT be permitted to call 'Azan' or that their mosques should not be called Masajid. Apparently, the last traces of the fear of God which put a semblance of restraint on the political Mullah of the past have now vanished from the darkened hearts of the Ahrari Maulvis.

The crux of the matter is that while the National Assembly, under pressure from the Maulvis, decided in 1974 to declare that the Ahmadis were not Muslims, they also made it a point to specify that they were not Muslims 'for the purposes of the Constitution and Law'. In other words, the Assembly desisted from encroaching upon the basic human rights guaranteed under Article 20 of the Constitution, which gave every citizen the right to profess and practise religion according to his conscience. What the Ahrari Maulvis are now demanding is that the Ahmadis should be debarred from professing and practising the religion in which their conscience believes.

The important questions which present themselves at the outset are:-

- a. Since Ahmadis are 'not Muslims' under the law in Pakistan, what is their de-facto religion?
- b. Is the religion of Ahmadis to be decided by Ahmadis themselves, or is it to be decided by an outside agency e.g. the National Assembly or a Martial Law Administration?
- c. If Ahmadis believe in the Holy Quran and Sunnah as their Shariat, and if the religion assigned to them by the said authority does NOT conform to that Shariat, do Ahmadis have the right to decline the assignment and keep on professing and practising their religion according to the Holy Quran and Sunnah?
- d. Regardless of the fact that Ahmadis are not considered Muslims in Pakistan for the purposes of the Constitution and Law, and since Ahmadis feel that they are not permitted to profess any religion other than Islam under the Divine Commandment: 'I want Islam to be your religion' (6:3) and that they are not permitted to declare any denomination for themselves other than 'Muslim' under the Quranic injunction: 'He - Allah - has named you Muslims' (22:78), will they be denied the right to follow the Divine Commandment, under the threat of penal action?

The fact of the matter is that the very idea behind the demand is repugnant to Islam, which is the first religion to establish the concept of religious freedom for the whole of mankind under its universal charter of:

لَا كَرْهَ فِي الدِّينِ (البقرة: ٢٥٤)

'There is no compulsion in matters of religion' (2:256). Commonsense dictates that no one, not even a parliamentary majority, has the right to assign an arbitrary name to a religious minority against its wishes, and having assigned such a name, to produce a 'made to order' religion for that minority to profess, practise and propagate.

If Ahmadis, and only Ahmadis, are the final judge as to what their religious beliefs are, it is appropriate that a description of their beliefs should be given in the words of the Founder of the Ahmadiyya Community, Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad:-

'We believe that there is no God but Allah, and Mohammad, peace and blessings of Allah be upon him, is His Messenger and Khatamul Ambia. We also believe that angels truly exist, the resurrection of the dead and the judgement will truly take place, and that the Heaven and the Hell do also truly exist. We believe that whatever God has revealed in the Holy Quran, and whatever our Prophet, peace and blessings of Allah

be upon him, has said, are the ultimate truths and anyone who detracts from or adds anything to Shariate-Islam or inducts licence and liberty in its basic tenets, is without faith and has strayed from the path of Islam. We call upon our Jamaat that they keep full and eternal faith in the Kalima-e-Tayiba. They must practise Islam, in all its detail, be meticulous in the performance of Roza, Namaz, Zakat and Haj, and dutifully observe all the 'do's' and 'don't's' laid down by Allah and His Prophet, peace and blessings of Allah be upon him. They must also believe in the sanctity of those tenets as have been passed down to us as part of Islam under the practical and theoretical consensus of the great Muslim saints of the past and the consensus of Ahle-Sunnat. The Heaven and the Earth are a witness that this is our true faith'.

(Ayyam-us-Sulh)

(pages 86-87)

'We are Muslims. We believe in God, Who is One, and in Kalima. We believe that Quran is the Book of Allah and Mohammad, peace and blessings of Allah be upon him, is His Prophet and Khatamul Ambia. We believe in the existence of angels, in the day of Judgement, and in the existence of Heaven and Hell. We say our daily prayers, keep fast during Ramazan and turn towards the Qibla. We consider it our duty to refrain from whatever Allah and His Prophet forbid us to do and to do whatever they command us to do. We have no authority to add or to detract anything from the Islami Shariat. We accept as a part of Islam all that has come to us from the Holy Prophet, peace and blessings of Allah be upon him, whether or not we understand its *raison d'être*. By the Grace of God, we are Momin, Muslim and Muwahhid.'

(Nourul-Haq, Part I)

page 5.

This is our religion, which we believe to be truly 'Islam'. If anyone is of the view that it is not Islam, he is at liberty to call it by whatever name he wishes. However, he has no right to prevent us from professing and practising the faith in which we truly believe.

USE OF ISLAMIC TERMINOLOGY

The Ahraris take particular exception to the use of Islamic terminology e.g. the use of names 'Masjid' and 'Azan' in respect of Ahmadiyya Mosques and call to prayers, and the use of terms Nabi, Rasul, Ummul mominin, Ahle-Bait, Alaihissalam, Raziallah-Anho, etc., in respect of Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad, his family and companions. Our views are as follows:-

Nabi and Rasul. These are terms which are in vogue since the days of

the Bible, and are freely used by the Jews and Christians who are neither Muslims nor do they believe in the divine origin of Islam. Ahmadis on the other hand, do not believe in any Shariat other than the Holy Quran and Sunnah and have no option but to use these terms wherever their use becomes obligatory under conventional Islamic usage and practice and the Sayings of the Holy Prophet, peace and blessings of Allah be upon him.

Alaihissalam is the same prayer in 'Third person – singular' as 'Assalamo Alaina' prayed in every Namaz by all Muslims, and 'Assalamo Alaikum' the customary Muslim greeting. It has been used extensively in Muslim literature for a number of Muslim saints other than Prophets, e.g. Hazrat Imam Hasan, Hazrat Imam Husain, Maulana Ismail Shaheed etc. It has even been used, as a mark of respect, for Hazrat Abu Talib, who never accepted Islam. Hazrat Maulvi Abdul Hayye Farangi Mahal, in his book Sarwari Azizi (translation of Fatawa Azizi) Volume I, Page 115, writes that the use of the term 'Alaihissalam' is permissible for persons other than Prophets according to the Holy Quran and the Sayings of the Holy Prophet. As far as the Ahmadis are concerned, they believe in Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad to be 'Mehdi' and 'Masihe-Mauood' and their right to this belief has been confirmed by Amendment 2 to the Constitution of Pakistan. The term 'Alaihissalam' has been used for 'Mehdi' as well as for 'Masihe-Mauood' in conventional Islamic literature throughout the ages.

Sahabi or Ashab. This term has certainly been used for the companions of the Holy Prophet, peace and blessings of Allah be upon him, but not exclusively. The Holy Prophet himself has used the words:

عِيسَى نَبِيِّ اللَّهِ وَاصْحَابُهُ

(Sahih Muslim)

BEIRUT VOL. IV, p. 2) in the context of the appearance of Masihe-Mauood amongst the Muslims. The word 'Sahabi' has also been used in respect of the companions of Hazrat Jafar Sadiq (Chaudah Sitare, p. 256). Hazrat Shah Waliullah Muhaddis Dehlavi, has used it in respect of his own companions and said:

أَلَهُمْ بَعْضَ اصْحَابِنَا

(Addurrussamin, p. 4)

The word 'Ashab' has also been extensively used in the Holy Quran e.g., 'Ashab-ul-Kahf', 'Ashabul Feel', 'Ashabul Ukhdud', 'Ashabul-Madyan', 'Ashabul Jannah', 'Ashabul Yameen', 'Ashabush Shimal', 'Ashabul Quboor' etc., in which the word 'Ashab' derives its meaning entirely with reference to the context.

Ummul Mominin. This term is, no doubt, used for the holy wives of the Prophet, peace and blessings of Allah be upon him. However, it has also been used for other venerable ladies of Islam, including the great mother

of Hazrat Sayyad Abdul Qadir Jilani (Tazkira Ghausia). In a book named 'Istilahatul Ulumul Islamia' (written by Sheikh Mohammad Aala bin Ali Thanvi and published in Beirut) there is a detailed and useful discussion of the generalised use of this term. It must also be clearly understood that when Ahmadis use the term Ummul Mominin, i.e. Mother of the Believers, in respect of the venerable wife of Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad, they only refer to her spiritual motherhood of Ahmadis. They certainly do not mean to extend her spiritual motherhood to others who do not believe in Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad.

THE QUESTION OF ANNOYANCE

A propaganda theme, advanced by the Ahrar to justify their demands against Ahmadis, contends that if Ahmadis were allowed to practise their faith without let or hindrance i.e. if they offered Namaz ba Jamaat, called the Azan, and built mosques for themselves, the feelings of the Muslims will be injured. In a country in which a number of religious communities have to coexist, it must be analysed as to what does constitute an injury to the religious sentiments of a group and to what extent accommodation is required on each side in order to ensure communal harmony and peace within the country. Since the demand is being advanced and propagated in the name of Islam, it is essential to determine the attitude of the Holy Quran and the Sunnah on this question.

Whichever way one tries to define the term 'offensive' in relation to religious sentiments and susceptibilities of various groups, it is obvious that it does not include such things as the profession and practice of one's religion according to one's beliefs. As regards beliefs, the Quranic injunction is clear and unequivocal:-

'The truth is from your Lord. Whoever wishes to believe in it may do so, and whosoever wishes to be a disbeliever may (also) do so'. (ALKAHAF: 30)

As regards the freedom to worship, the policy laid down by the Holy Quran is equally clear. Allah commands the Holy Prophet to tell the disbelievers:-

'And I am not going to worship that which you worship nor will you worship which I worship. You have your religion (to follow) and I have mine' (109:5-7)

From the precept of the Holy Quran we now go to the example of the Holy Prophet of Islam. The forbearance shown by him to minority communities, first at Medina, and later throughout the Muslim State extending

upto and beyond the Arabian borders, is a shining example for the modern world to follow. He accorded complete religious freedom to the non-Muslim subjects and was so careful in respect of their sentiments that once he even admonished his companions that there was no need to make it a point of debate and dispute with the Jews in Medina that he (The Prophet) was higher in status to Moses. This was despite the fact that he was, undoubtedly, the greatest of all Prophets and, as he himself once stated, if Moses and Christ had been living in his time, they would have had no option but to become his disciples and to owe him allegiance.

There is not a single instance in which the Holy Prophet ever took exception to a non-Muslim following the teachings of Islam. Furthermore, he showed extraordinary tolerance and forbearance even under extreme provocation from his antagonists. Abdullah bin-Obaiyye-Ibne-Salool was the chief of hypocrites in Medina and during a span of five or six years of his life, he continued to create problems for the Holy Prophet, peace and blessings of Allah be upon him, personally and for the new State. In the campaign of Bani-Mustalake he addressed foul, insubordinate and highly provocative remarks against the person of the Holy Prophet, peace and blessings of Allah be upon him, which amounted to mutiny. When this was reported to the Holy Prophet, he forbade his enraged companions from retaliating. Later, the son of the offender, a devout Muslim, asked permission of the Holy Prophet to slay his father for his rank insolence and disobedience but, again, the Holy Prophet refused. And, that was not all. After some time, when the insolent Abdullah bin-Obaiyye died, the Prophet led the funeral prayers himself, overriding the advice and sentiments of his companions. Such is the shining example which the Holy Prophet set for the Muslims to follow for all time to come. Is there any other similar example in the history of mankind of such a long-suffering tolerance and magnanimous self-restraint as shown by our Holy Prophet at a time when he enjoyed absolute power as head of state.

The belief which is most offensive and repugnant to Islam is Shirk, associating partners with God, particularly of the Christian pattern, about which the Holy Quran cautions:-

'The skies may well-nigh burst because of that and the earth may shatter and the mountains may fall to pieces that they ascribed a son to the Gracious God' (19:88-89)

And, yet under the clear and unequivocal position taken by Islam in the matter of human rights, the Christians have enjoyed complete freedom of belief and worship in Muslim States throughout the ages, and do, so today in Pakistan. In fact even the numerically small minorities such as Hindus, Parsees, Sikhs, Budhists etc., have enjoyed complete freedom of worship in the country; the Sikh Gurudwaras have been kept up and maintained at

public expense and the people of Pakistan have good reason to be proud of it.

If the contention of the Ahrari Maulvis is that it is only the Ahmadis whose profession of their true faith and its practice agitate the public sentiments, then they are trying to make us believe:-

- a) That the Muslims of Pakistan do not get agitated when their fellow Christians worship the 'Son of God' (a sin, the spiritual consequences of which, in the words of the Holy Quran, may well-nigh destroy the universe) but they go crazy when the Ahmadis worship Allah, in exactly the manner taught by the Holy Prophet of Islam, peace and blessings of Allah be upon him.
- b) That they are happy to live in peace and harmony with all those who deny the prophethood of Hazrat Rehmatul-lil-Alamin, and whose malevolent and venomous literature directed against his holy person fill the libraries of the world, but their sentiments get hurt as soon as the Ahmadis profess that Hazrat Mohammad, peace and blessings of Allah be upon him, is the greatest of the Prophets of Allah, the last word in the perfection of prophethood, the *raison d'être* for the creation of the Universe, and the sole guide of humanity towards their Allah, so that there is no virtuous path left for mankind to follow except the one created by the sacred footsteps of the Holy Prophet.
- c) That they cheerfully tolerate the belief of non-Muslims in Pakistan that the Holy Quran is not a word of God and that it is, God forbid, a dishonest fabrication of the Holy Prophet of Islam, peace and blessings of Allah be upon him. But they get absolutely out of control when the Ahmadis declare that every word of the Sacred Book is the true word of God, that the Quran is all blessing for mankind, that there is no blessing outside it, and that the law given by the Holy Book is final, absolute and unalterable for all time to come.
- d) That the religious sentiments of the majority Community are not hurt if some of those, who are Muslims under Amendment 2 of the 1973 Constitution, do not follow the Holy Quran and Sunnah, because they do not really believe in the necessity of doing so due to their Western education, social upbringing or even sheer ignorance, but they are greatly hurt, if a member of a minority community who though not considered a Muslim under the Constitution, meticulously observes the tenets of the Holy Quran, and propagates them throughout the world because he sincerely believes that his own salvation and that of the mankind lies in following the Holy Quran.

The entire case for all the Ahrari demands against the Ahmadis is built on the premise that the feelings of Muslims are liable to be injured by the Ahmadis practising Shaaere Islam and using Islamic terminology. In reality, there is no reason for the feelings of a Muslim to get hurt if a non-Muslim practises Islam, because Islam is so tolerant in the matter of conscience that it guarantees the right of the non-Muslims to practise their own religion even if such a practice is highly repugnant to the basic tenets of Islam. This part of the argument may be concluded with a quotation from the 'Dacca Declaration' on the basic human rights in Islam, formally adopted by the Fourth Islamic Summit at Casablanca in January 1984:-

'And believe that all human beings form one family whose members are united by their subordination to Allah, and, being the descendants of Adam, all men are equal in dignity and basic duties and responsibilities without any discrimination on account of race, colour, language, religion, sex, political opinion, social status or other considerations.'

(DAWN dated 26 March 1984)

When the Ahrari Maulvis talk themselves hoarse about the religious sentiments of the Muslims, the first anomaly which comes to mind is the question of their credentials to speak on behalf of the Muslims of Pakistan. Right until 1947, in collusion with the Indian National Congress, they opposed the creation of Pakistan from a religious platform and, as soon as Pakistan was established, they usurped the same religious platform in the country to pose as the spokesmen of the Muslims in Pakistan.

It is also strange that the subject of injury to public sentiments and hurt feelings is being put forward by Ahrari Maulvis who spent their lifetime in hurling filthy abuses in public on the most revered leaders of other communities. Let no one forget that they did not spare even Quaid-i-Azam Muhammad Ali Jinnah at a time when the Quaid was the recognised leader of the entire Muslim nation on the sub-continent. Today, when they argue that the professing and practising of Islam, on the part of the Ahmadis, hurts the religious sentiments of the majority community, they do so only because they have no valid argument to offer in support of their totally illogical and unacceptable demands against the Ahmadis. It is our firm belief that no Muslim, worth his name, can ever be hurt, if Islam is practised by any one and that the alleged injury is but a slander against the overwhelming majority of the people. At this critical juncture, there are far graver happenings, inside and outside the country, which hurt the feelings and sentiments of the people of Pakistan and not the least of them is the spectre of the political Mullah ominously raising an ugly head. To once again create discord and chaos in the country.

THE POLITICAL DRAMA

There are indications that the political drama staged by Majlise-Tahaffuze-Khatme-Nubuwwat is building up for the final act. The Administration has been confronted with certain demands in order to place it on the horns of a dilemma. If the demands are rejected on merits, the Government will be dubbed as insincere in its claim to establish Nizame-Islam in the country. An attempt will then be made to start public agitation and give it a violent turn by hiring professional hands to initiate mischief. Since the possible break-down of law and order would be a nightmare for a Martial Law Administration, it is assumed that at least some of the demands will be met at the outset. Once that happens, the Maulvis would then emerge as the victorious champions of Islam, gaining tremendously in public image and political strength. Having gained concessions from the Government in the first trial of strength, they would make it a basis for further and more drastic demands, thus leading to an escalation of agitation, lawlessness and violence. The primary aim is not to find a solution to any problem which might exist but to create and maintain a state of turmoil in the country to gain political objectives.

Amidst all the confusing issues created by the Ahrari Mullahs in the garb of the defenders of Islam, the only question that is basic and relevant to the interests of the country and the nation is:

What are the ultimate objectives of these people who have always played a nefarious and destructive role in the politics of Pakistan?

A CRISIS OF CONSCIENCE

And this brings us to the question of public response. The present phase of violent campaign against Ahmadis is about 12 months old, during which period hundreds of meetings and conferences have been held throughout the country and millions of leaflets, posters and magazines distributed to the public. A flood-gate of totally false and fabricated anti-Ahmadiyya propaganda has been opened, inundating towns and villages, universities and colleges, factories and shopping centres. It is claimed that our Kalima is other than la-ilaha illallah Mohammad-ur-Rusulullah; that our Shariat is not the Holy Quran but some other book which is known only to the Maulvis; that our professed love for the Holy Prophet, peace and blessings of Allah be upon him, is nothing but deception; that in the sacred name of Islam we practise and propagate a religion which is totally different; that we do not believe in the Day of Judgement and that we have created our own 'Heaven' and 'Hell' at Rabwah, to befool the ignorant. In the speeches made by some of the Maulvis in public meetings, the language used with reference to Ahmadi

men and women and their Holy Founder, his Successors and their families, is so filthy that it just cannot be quoted. The word 'Qadiani' has now been turned into an abuse and any one whom the Maulvis wish to denounce in public is called a 'Qadiani'. But inspite of this unchecked and uncensored campaign lasting more than a year, the attitude of the public has been completely indifferent. This becomes evident as soon as one sees the number and type of people attracted to such meetings and conferences.

When a law-abiding minority is being subjected to the worst form of religious persecution, when the pulpit of the Holy Prophet, peace and blessings of Allah be upon him, is being openly desecrated and exploited by a ruthless brand of Maulvis, when Islam is being exposed to ridicule throughout the world by totally un-Islamic and irrational demands, when men and women are being murdered in cold blood because of their faith, and when dead bodies of Ahmadis are being pulled out of their ancestral graveyards, is it not time that the free and the fairminded people in Pakistan should abandon their silence and indifference to aggression. Where are the poets who become emotional on a mere mention of Vietnam or South Africa? Where are the ideologues who shout themselves hoarse in support of victims in Nicaragua and Eirteria? And, finally where are the journalists who swear by the sanctity of their pen when they write in defence of individual rights and freedom? Do they not see the basic human rights of a patriotic minority being trampled under their eyes in their own towns and villages and streets? If they do, does it ever touch a sensitive chord in their conscience? Pray, let it not be said by the future historians that when the fate of freedom, human dignity and decency hung in the balance, not a single voice was raised in their defence in this cherished land of Pakistan.

Jamaat-e Ahmadiyya is a purely religious community with its members spread over 89 countries in all the Continents of the globe. It has taken us almost a century to convince the world, that in this era of instability, agitational politics and turmoil, we are a people who stand firmly for the supremacy of law, for toleration and for peaceful co-existence. This image is a vital part of our global mission and we shall do everything in our power to uphold that image, whatever the provocation. Our peaceful posture is, however, based on faith, strength and sacrifice and not on weakness or expediency.

The ominous patch of cloud which was ignored despite warning signals, is now turning itself into a thunderous storm and may take its toll of many a ship in mid-ocean. To an observer it may seem that the tiny boat of Ahmadiyyat is also heading full sail straight into the eye of the cyclone. That may seem so, but let no one have an anxious moment regarding its fate. The boat has weathered many a storm; it is destined to survive and to sail on.

For, the undaunted boat is flying the flag of Hazrat Mohammad, peace and blessings of Allah be upon him, and watching over its safety is Allah — Wiser than the wisest and Mightier than the mightiest.

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